⅄ *Atari News*

...AND COMMENT, compiled by JOHN NAGY

CHICAGO ATARIFEST: CANCELLED. The word came first through ATARI USER GROUP REP SANDY AUSTIN, then from several vendors who were planning to show, then from insiders plannning the MAGIC show for DETROIT, then, finally, from some of the CHICAGO clubs themselves. Too little help, too late, plus vendor holdouts, made it impossible to meet the deadline and bottom line. Meanwhile, DETROIT's show looks all the stronger as it will now be the ONLY midwest ATARIFEST this year. BE THERE, August 29-31. Full details NEXT month.

ATARI CORPORATION STOCK, first released in November of last year at about $11.50 a share, is at the time of this writing selling at about $15. Of course, that's only impressive if you know that the stock SPLIT two-for-one in June. That's more than doubling in only six months.

Those PRODUCTS: Everybody at ATARI still swears that ALL the currently announced products are in production and should be AVAILABLE "by the time you read this"... or soon... or certainly by the end of the summer.

OPTIMIZED SYSTEMS SOFTWARE (OSS) has a new TOOLKIT for BASIC XL, adding all the power of BASIC XE except the EXTENDED PROGRAM AREA. The new extensions file for BASIC XL will include those amaxing add-ons like SORTUP and SORTDOWN, to name a few. By the way, OSS also says NO RUNTIME PACKAGE for BASIC XE will be released, so don't expect too many "extended" PD gems to surface.

Another coup for USER GROUPS: SPRINGBOARD SOFTWARE, makers of NEWROOM, CERTIFICATE MAKER, etc. for almost everybody but ATARI, has decided to rethink their position and is prepping an 8-bit ATARI version of NEWSROOM, slated for fall release. A letter writing campaign was initiated by several user groups and carried forward by ANTIC MAGAZINE. ST versions of all SPRINGBOARD products are either already being shipped or are being developed.

MINDSCAPE SOFTWARE, makers of some remarkable software for the ST, has bought out CBS SOFTWARE and has re-released some titles from the CBS collection. PLUTOS, a fabulous MINDSCAPE arcade game for the ST, is now legitimately released and features "lots of" enhancements over the pirate beta version that has been floating around BBS's as a "public domain" item. Many clubs put the game in their software libraries, not knowing it was not PD.

First it was ATARI PLANETARIUM, now, AUTODUEL, a new game from ORIGIN SYSTEMS, is said not to run on INDUS or ICD DOUBLER equipped ATARI 1050 disk drives due to a new copy protection scheme. More and more, these are turning into USE protection schemes. Hardware-specific software is a growing trend- be sure you get a return privilege from a reputable dealer to protect YOURSELF.

NATIONAL REVIEW magazine, July 3, 1987: "Soviet fad for personal computers is wearing off. Problems: the machines are lousy, and the Soviets forgot to make software. Exception: CHess champ Gary Kasparov donated 26 ATARI 130's to the KOMYUTER youth club." Anybody plan to follow up and see if the Iron Curtain will pass PD SOFTWARE?

CASTLE COMMUNICATIONS

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M.A.M. this Month ■■■

M.A.M NEEDS YOU... and so does your CLUB. We go through ARTICLES like there is no tommorow, and need ADVERTISERS to make MAM LARGER and economical for the clubs to get it. Contact your club officers if you have an article or a prospective advertiser!

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This publication is the official newsletter of several independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of their members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

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✒ Publisher's Note
by JOHN NAGY
(517) 487-5646

First thing, let me say that we are sorry that this issue is behind schedule. Contributions came late, the editors (Rich and Judy Barnes) were unavailable due to overtime and evening work, and the usual helpers have been vacationing. The same conditions also continue to be the reason for our less-than-40- page size... lack of contributions and ads.

Four out of our seven groups will NOT be meeting this or next month anyway, so timing is not as critical for most readers anyway. August MAY again be late and/or small, so be forewarned...

Jeff Bone has been busy contacting the may dealers and manufacturers I talked to at the CES, and it looks like FALL will be big for ADVERTISING, so things may well pick up then.

Speaking of the CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW, almost ALL of our article contributions this month were about it! This lead to a huge editing mess, as most of the articles covered much of the same ground. I have pooled all the information and tried to make it into a few specific articles, with credits going to all the contribuing writers. I hope this doesn't offend any of them, but the alternatives are either a lot of very similar articles or dropping some altogether. This way, at least we are getting as much information out as possible.

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The CHICAGO ATARIFEST, once said to be in UNION trouble, later determined NOT to be, is NOW reported to be CANCELLED, or at least POSTPONED until next year.

Scheduled to be held the last weekend in JULY, it is NOT happening due to a failure of the participating clubs in the CHICAGO area to follow through on their individual commitments for the show. Sources closely involved say that materials were developed late if at all, mailed even later, and generally, the groups felt they could NOT be ready in time. Even finding out about the CANCELLATION has been a challenge, as no official word has been posted in the expected areas by the groups responsible. Instead, I have heard it from several vendors that expected to be going to the show, plus ATARI's SANDY AUSTIN was spreading the word via references on GEnie.

Although it is sad that more involvement or co-operation was not forthcoming in time to save the CHICAGO ATARIFEST, but it IS

understandable. Most events like this are the result of the efforts of a dedicated few, despite the widespread "official" duties and responsibility. A show like these ATARIFESTs can easily become too much for the hardworking core.

The failure of the CHICAGO show is just more evidence that ATARI club-goers are more and more a CONSUMER group and less and less an ACTIVITY group. That's not necessarily a BAD thing, but it IS a change worth noting and dealing with. In fact, we MUST deal with it effectively and change the focus of our groups to match what can be realistically achieved, or will we will not be here tommorrow'.

Hopefully, at least the DETROIT show will be even better and bigger as a result of the misfortune of CHICAGO. It seems that most of the vendors and prospective visitors that now WON't be able to go to CHICAGO will now BE CERTAIN to make it to DETROIT, which will also be the first ATARIFEST to run THREE DAYS. Plans are reported to be coming along well, piloted by the MAGIC ATARI CLUB. We will give you the final details about the DETROIT show NEXT month, as it will be held the last weekend in AUGUST. We wish them luck and offer what support we can... spare!

"GOD, give me the STRENGTH to CHANGE
        those things that I can...

            ...the SERENITY to cope with the
        things I cannot change...

            ... and the WISDOM to KNOW THE
        DIFFERENCE between the two'"

(often overheard - or thought - at Officer's meetings of clubs everwhere....)

Atari News

A new software-only IBM EMULATOR has been released that claims 99.95% compatibility with MS-DOS programs, and a 80% execution speed on the ST. It's called PC:DITTO, and people are already raving about it. For $80, the program may be all anyone really needs in the way of BIG BLUE operation on their ST. Reviews are universally glowing. Contact AVANT GARDE SYSTEMS, 381 Pablo Point Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32225. Rumor is that the same company will put out a $350 HARDWARE external IBM emulator in a few months!

Also new in PC EMULATION: HAPPY version 7.1! New software is/has been shipped to registered HAPPY owners. Yes, the same modification that has allowed thousands of ATARI users to make "backups" of copyprotected software, as well as adding true double density and ultra-fast speed to the ATARI 1050 disk drive NOW allows you to READ AND WRITE MS-DOS disks. It won't make programs run on the other machine, but data files (like word processing and program code for editing) port perfectly onto SINGLE SIDED formatted IBM disks. ATARI end-of-line to ASCII carriage return/linefeed translation is a option. You can't format in MS DOS on the HAPPY, nor read or write double-sided disks, but that's only a small hindrance. I now can take work to and from the office, and watch the reactions when my co-workers ask what model IBM I have at home... Oh, yes HAPPY software version 7.1 also allows many more types of copyprotected disks to be copied without needing a "runtime HAPPY", meaning that they are true COPIES, not translations as in the version 7. Contact HAPPY COMPUTERS, Box 1268, Morgan Hill CA, 95037, or call (408) 779-3830.

HAPPY for the ST? Yes, but not yet. Word has it that a CART version of a HAPPY software package will be released for the ST that will allow a "photocopy" of any disk... ANY DISK... ANY FORMAT... to be made in an ST. Yes, AMIGA, PC, ANYTHING. Sounds interesting! Just more proof that the ATARI is the machine that can be ANYTHING if it tries!

MORE EMULATOR NEWS: The "ST TRANSFORMER" ATARI 8-bit emulator for the ST that you read about here in COMPUTER SHOPPER will shortly be published by ANALOG MAGAZINE. Scheduled for August or September printing, DAREK MIHOCKA's emulator will be free for distribution, and will include documented source code in hopes of further enhancements by other programmers. It appears that the "print" version will NOT have PLAYER-MISSLE GRAPHICS included because of too many bugs in those routines. DAREK expects that to be one of the first revisions after the original release.

Although the ST TRANSFORMER issue may be resolved, there seems a growing attitude at ATARI that the USER might be the enemy. NEIL HARRIS, ATARI's main product man, referred to the several user groups pushing for the 8-bit emulator as "trouble makers", called DAREK MIHOCKA a "TWERP", "a pain in the ...", and a "lousy programmer" during his speaking engagement with the CHICAGO area user groups during the CES. He has also accused users of "viciousness" in messages on GEnie telecommunication system when they questioned ATARI's delivery on product promises. Lets hope this attitude is specific to NEIL, and that his recent vacation has brightened his outlook. After all, we all want the same thing: the best performance out of our ATARI.

CAPITOL HILL
ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

SERVING THE LANSING AREA ATARI

C.H.A.O.S. is the CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNER'S SOCIETY, serving the ATARI community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The CAMPUS HILL ATARI OWNER'S SOCIETY is the Michigan State University chapter of C.H.A.O.S.

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities, as well as access to our other resources. Dues may be paid at any C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

Sysop John Nagy and C.H.A.O.S. invite you to call one of the country's finest BBS's at 517-371-1106. 300/1200 baud, 24 hours a day (ATASCII/ASCII).

Inquiries regarding C.H.A.O.S., mail orders, memberships and etc, should be sent to:

C.H.A.O.S.
P.O. Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8-bit and 16-bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month. The 8-bit SIG Atari, for 400/800, and XL/XE owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying, or any violation of copyright laws, is not condoned or allowed at any C.H.A.O.S. sponsored function, including the club BBS.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF CHAOS

Position	Name	Phone #
President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice President	John Baker	641-4430
Sec'y-Treasur.	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8-bit Rep	Marvin Goldstein	332-4160
16-bit Rep	John Johnson	355-4219
Membership	Gary Ferris	393-2593
Library Mgr.	John Baker	641-4430
ST Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
XL/XE Librian	Bill Johnson	675-7166
Publ. Librarn.	Richard Evans	351-2381
ST Publ. Libr.	Chet Kapusinski	676-4539
XL/XE SIG Cor.	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coordn.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS Sysop	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Lewis	339-1793
Newsltr Editor	Rich Barnes	349-0513
Advertising	Jeff Bone	321-5510

Presidential Address

President's Corner
by Leo Sell

Somehow as I write this, I'm thinking that I'm rather typical of the summer computer user. My computer time has cut way back so that I can do those wonderful homeowner duties like scraping and painting, fixing roofs, trimming trees, remodelling and so on. Stick in some weekends away, vacations and just plain exhaustion and the old Atari is just pining away.

John Nagy and I went to the CES in Chicago last month. Didn't see much that impressed me, except that I think Atari is poised to make barrels ful of money off of the "NEW" XE game system. For Atari users and user groups, looking for support from Atari, I think things look dim. Their attitude increasingly seems to be, "We have your money already. Go away so we can sell stuff to someone else".

This attitude of indifference underlines the need for Atari user groups. Frankly people, groups like ours are the only support you can realistically expect. And of course, as

always, you'll only get something out if you put something in.

On the encouraging side, MOST third party developers we saw are either developing or plan to develop , software for the ST. The ST is more and more becoming the computer of choice.

Speaking of choices, there are rumors going around that the corporation I work for, having a close relationship with Big Blue, will offer a fantastic deal on IBM PS 2 systems. The intial cost would be around $1200. However, I don't plan to get one since the ST now has IBM emulation available from software, and I can get a far more powerful setup by sticking with the ST if I want to shell out $1200.

Yes, you read right. The name of the product and company escapes me, but GOOD IBM emulation from software was shown at the recent Comdex. Writers in the Trade are very impressed. With an add-on 5.25 drive, you could have the best of both worlds.

Well, I'm too warm and my family and I are getting ready for camping this weekend, so Atari time is over.

The list of jobs that need to be filled is below. I am especially anxious to fill the Publicity and the Advertising positions. We need to cut costs, increase revenue and bring in people, so those positions could really help us out.

The following positions are open:

> Publicity Manager
> Advertizing Manager
> Publications Librarian
> Newsletter Editor
> Assistant Disk Librarians

Meeting Minutes

JUNE ST-UTTERINGS
by Brian Goluska

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the 2nd Saturday of each month, at the Physics-Astronomy building of MSU. See the CHAOS title page for directions.

On a hot, sunny Saturday in June, I expected a very light turnout for the CHAOS ST meeting. But 17 people showed up, one more than last month (although about half of the mid-winter peak). This meeting there were several who didn't own ST's, but were considering a purchase. Steve Brooks opened with a discussion of the Consumer Electronics Show

(CES) that he and other CHAOS members attended in Chicago. The CES is covered elsewhere in this magazine.

Peter Miller talked about the upgraded VIP, which has the GEM interface. Since people were interested, Peter agreed to show this at a future meeting.

Commercial games STARGLIDER and HIGH ROLLER were demo'd by Greg Gaskill. We also had a surprise disk of the month from Sally Nagy. Included were BARNYARD, an educational game that matches remembered squares, like concentration, PICSWITCH version 7, which converts NEO, DEGAS, and TINY files, MILEBORN, a French card game, and FOLDERXX, which gets around the 40 folder limit to allow up to 999 folders. (A folder is like a directory, for you IBM'ers). I'll close this month with a tip for sophisticated users. Did you know that the ST makes one heck of a Tektronix terminal emulator? The people at the Cyclotron lab have picked up a few monochrome 1040's to use as Tektronix emulators. More than that, they said that they ordered the first one mail order after 3 pm on a Friday, and had it delivered at noon on Monday! Once they tried it out, they got a couple more. I'm not going to claim that the ST can make a dent in the PC compatible business world, but there are niches where the ST can be the best for the money (power without the price).

Telecom

THE CHAOS DOWNLOAD
by John Nagy

This month begins my third year as SYSOP of the CHAOS BBS. I want to thank ALL our callers for making it a pleasure to run the system. It has and continues to bring me into contact with interesting ATARI people from all over the world.

Summer brings odd things to BBS'ing. Lots of our REGULARS don't call for weeks on end, but we get lots of new long-distance traffic. Lately, it's been more INTERNATIONAL than usual.

We are getting quite a following of CHAOS BBS users in parts of CANADA, and even LONDON, ENGLAND. My recent plugs for our plentiful UPGRADE INFO in my COMPUTER SHOPPER column has helped, I'm sure. Anyway, many of these callers are bringing interesting files with them, and they in turn are making our download section bristle with intrigue. John Lewis is trying to keep up with the 8-bit contributions, and John Baker is handling the ST files as usual. The best of what we get plus some remarkable goodies from almost everywhere are passed on to you in the CHAOS DISK-OF-THE-MONTHs, so you no- modem folks won't miss out... and the rest of you don't HAVE to download everything, de-archive, reset DOS, make menus, etc. It's all done on the DOM for either the 8 or 16 bit machines.

Our BBS software continues to change as I add more features... the latest one, showing CITY, STATE in messages and "LAST CALLERS LIST" has greatly increased the interest in the message bases... many callers never realized WHERE they were talking to. More SPECIAL-PURPOSE message bases and E-MAIL (automatic when you log on, so it can't be missed) are next on the adgenda.

GUY HURT and his trivia game (Base 4, FUN AND GAMES) have been widely read if not widely participated in... and SIGHTS AND SOUNDS (Base 5) is virtually not being used. CHECK INTO THEM, particulary SIGHTS AND SOUNDS as it would be great to get more current MOVIE REVIEWS online there. There have been several added recently that almost no one has read!

Remember, the CHAOS BBS offers a great way to get out of the blistering sun for a few minutes each day... Glad to have you visit! We run our 10 meg system for ST and 8-bit ATARI users at 300 and 1200 baud, 24 hours, 517-371-1106.

Til next month, SEE YA IN CHAT!

Disk Library

THE LIBRARY TABLE
by John Baker

Hot summer temps and explosive Atari bargains have arrived in force. Rumor has it that several of the massive specially constructed warehouses built by Atari to hold their latest vaporware products are bulging at the seams. Atari will soon be emptying these warehouses, and you the Atari user will get a shot at these goodies. The latest vaporware creations (besides the MEGA ST, Clones, modems, etc), which are old news, are causing quite a stir. These hot new items are: An ST emulator for the 400, A plug in cartridge enabling the use of a 410 cassette recorder for a 20 meg storage device, A new 3 sided density and one quarter disk drive, A new memory resident 8-bit DOS that is only 64K in size, and the real show stopper: The blitter/unix laser modem cd-rom printer cassette calculator!!!! Wow!!! What more can I say! Atari has outdone themselves this time. And the best part is, that they have promised delivery on these items within the next week!!! Vaporware fever has gripped the nation!

Impending press releases are said to indicate that Atari, to show their appreciation and support of loyal Atari users groups, will make initial shipments of this fantastic vaporware selection available ONLY to their valued user group members. Atta boy Jack! I knew you really liked us all along. Atari officials could not be contacted to confirm any of these rumors because they were all "still on the boat", personally escorting their new "offerings" from Taiwan. Hopefully more details will be released soon.

What we can confirm though, is the fact that decent software is still continually showing up for atari users owning 8-bit and ST machines. The warm weather and associated increase in outdoor activity has led to the usual slump in member attendance at CHAOS meetings. Although, it's kinda hard to put a computer meeting over a weekend at the beach. People not attending these meetings though are missing out on first shot at some great new software for their machines.

New files are appearing regularly on the BBS as well as exclusive additions to our library. Bill Johnson, for the 8-bit, and Sally Nagy, for the ST group, are spending considerable time working on their respective sections to keep you up to date on hot new items.

Our ST library is growing with each passing week, which necessitated a re-work of the ST

library listing. A preliminary copy was passed out at the last meeting. The final update and complete ST index should be available at this months meeting. You need the new listing if you plan to purchase ST disks.

Stay current with whats happening with your respective machines by attending the CHAOS 8-bit and ST meetings. See you there.

ST LIBRARY
BY SALLY NAGY

For those of you who missed our last meeting of the STING (St Interest Group), I will explain what has been happening in the Library.

The library is now divided and organized in the following way: UTILITIES SECTION, A-Communications, B-Languages, C-General, D-Business/Financial, E-Applications; GAMES SECTION, A-Adventure, B-Thinking, C-Arcade, D-GFA Basic/Basic, E-Monochrome; DEMOS SECTION, Pictures, Sound/Music and Graphic Display; EDUCATION SECTION; and TEXT SECTION.

Many of our library disks have "ARCed" (archived for space saving) files. When there are ARCed files on a particular disk you will also find the files to de-ARC them.

The new disks for JULY are each as full as practical, and are as follows:

PICS #9-12 -- These are in the TINY format with viewer. (There are pictures of Tweety, Coyote, Startrek Crew and many more.)

SOUND/MUSIC #5 a demo of Midisoft's METATRAK. Try this out before buying the program commerically.

GRAPHIC DISPLAY #6 -- A great demo in that it shows off the power of the ST. Many of the files available for the ST are demoed.

UTILITIES A4 -- This disk features Citadel's BBS. If you are planning on starting a BBS grab this disk. It also has COLORBBS TEXT, X,Y,Z MODEM TEXT, and the newest HOTLIST of ST BBS's across the country.

UTILITIES B8 -- A disk full of Pascal and Modula_2 text and source files. Also some helpful hints from OSS.

UTILITIES B9 -- Are you tried of ST BASIC? Try TINY BASIC. Included on the disk is its Source and Doc file. Did you get LOGO with your ST and are wondering how to write some programs? You are in luck, this disk has lots of LOGO files. Some for Color and some for Monochrome users.

UTILITIES B10 -- Can't seem to get enough "C" source files and docs of compiled "C" programs? This disk is for you.

UTILITIES B11 -- On this disk you will find a demo of 4XForth with docs.

UTILITIES C10 -- Try out two new (de)ARC files, some different formatters, ramdisks, alarm clock and more.

UTILITIES D7 -- Has demos and text on DB Man, Expert Opinion, and HD Base.

UTILITIES D8 -- Has hints and demo of VIP Professional.

UTILITIES D9 -- Is a demo of Zoomracks II.

UTILITIES D10 -- A demo of Easy Draw.

UTILITIES E4 -- Is for those who have Publishing Parnter. On this disk there is a font editor, fonts, and printer drivers.

GAMES A3 -- Has Infocom playable demos of ZORK1, PLANETFALL, INFIDEL, WITNESS. Hints for playing ZORK 2 & 3, WITNESS, SUNDOG, and TIMEBANDITS. You can also create your own adventure game.

GAMES B6 -- On this disk you will find AZARIAN (a demo), SCORE4, ST_SLOTS written in GFA BASIC (RUN ONLY FILE included on disk), CRAPS.PRG, and POKER.PRG.

... and there's more where THEY came from!

******NOTICE!!!******

THE NEW ST LIBRARY CATALOG HAS BEEN RELEASED! Eight pages of great ST disks. Get yours at any CHAOS MEETING, or if you can't make it, give JOHN BAKER a call at (517) 641-4430 and he will see that you get one in the mail right away.

We told you before that C.H.A.O.S. was RENTING their entire DISK LIBRARY... Well, we STILL ARE, but the rate has changed slightly and now may be even MORE attractive to clubs and individuals. RENT our close to 250 disk 8-bit library OR our nearly 100 disk ST LIBRARY for a MONTH for only $65!!! Or BOTH for $100! These are ALL PRIME programs, fully catagorized and tested, with documentation, as you have come to expect from CHAOS.

Take your time and copy whatever you want, then return the library within the month! Contact JOHN BAKER at the number above for more information... those who have rented the library already have been THOUGHLY PLEASED... you CAN'T beat the VALUE!

GENE/EE ATARI GROUP

Presidential Mumblings for July
by Jim Steele

Well, here we go again with another month's foolishness. The big hoopla this time is the CES reports sure to be in this issue somewhere. Personally, I was disappointed with the news from Chicago. I'm becoming convinced that the Tramiel Atari cares very little for 8-bit owners. Make sure you read Jerry's reports from CES. The ANTIC online reports seemed to lack a certain reality. (In my humble opinion!)

The GAG officers election is comming up once again, in October. I urge you all to consider running for a post. I admitted at the June meeting that I will not serve a 4th term as President. In fact, I probably should not have taken it this time. Most of you know that when I moved up to the 16bit world I chose the Amiga over the ST. I was convinced that the loyal 800's wouldn't be relegated to the legendary closet. (Where all old toys end up.) But I was wrong. If you see your system as a means to an end (a tool), then the venerable 800 still can perform usefull work. (Like the label on this newsletter,eh?) But I've always seen my system as a hobby. Gotta have the latest and greatest, and unfortunately the 800 isn't old enough to be a "Classic" like, say, a Model T Ford. At any rate, I believe I've heard some mutterings from someone who's willing to take on the task of President.

Now for the rest of the crew, well, we'll just have to see what develops. Remember, if someone doesn't do it... It won't get done. It wouldn't hurt to give some new blood a chance, and give the old blood a rest. Along the same lines, be sure to check in with Jerry if you can help out as a gofer at the Atari Magic show. Should be fun. We also need more articles from you for the newsletter. Review something, write a program, tell how to do something, or whatever. If you can't upload to CHAOS, send it to FACTS, and I'll forward it. No modem (shame on you ;-)) send it on disk. We really want articles by the group members.

Back to the business at hand. Just a reminder that there will be no August meetings. Turn the computer off, go outside and soak up some rays. See ya in September.

Next Meetings:
July 8, 6:30 pm Neithercut
August- no meetings
September 9, 6:30 pm Neithercut
September 26, 10am National Computer Clinic
October 14, 6:30pm Neithercut (Officer Elections!)

Genesee Atari Group serves Flint and the Genesee county area. Membership dues are $15/yr. Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month (except August) at the Neithercut school 2010 Crestbrook, Flint,MI. Contact: GAG c/o Jim Steele 4711 Drummond Sq. Flint,MI 48504
If joining by mail, make checks payable to Jim Steele, thank you for your support.....

GAG VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!
by Jerry Cross

The Michigan Atari General Information Conferance (MAGIC) will be hosting an Atari show August 28-30 at the Southfield Hilton Hotel. As co-sponsors of this show, the Genesee Atari Group is looking for members to help with the show.   We need at least 15 GAG members who can spend at least five hours helping to set up booths, watch the crowd, answer questions, and many other jobs. We will also need people to work in the GAG booth at the show, to sell disks, newsletters, and to supply information about our club.   Volunteers will get free admission to ALL THREE days of the show, including all concerts, and seminars. You will also get a free Atari-Magic T-Shirt! Our club will receive a free booth at the show in exchange for your help. Please lend a hand! I guarantee you will have a great time!   I will try to form some carpools for those members who need transportation to Detroit. Just let me know if you need a lift.   If you are interested, please contact Jerry Cross immediately! I will need to know what days and times you are available, and what jobs you can work. Call me at 736-4544, or leave a note on my BBS (736-3920).
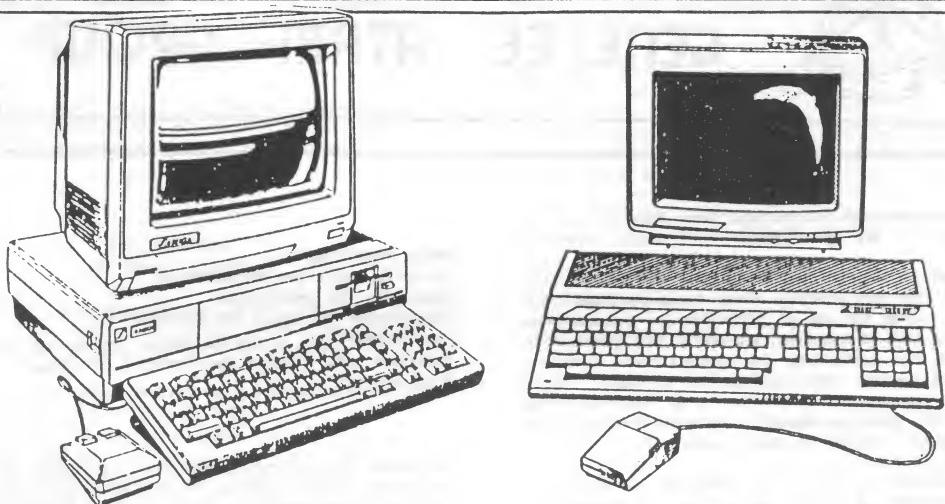
WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

Meeting Minutes

WAUG MEETING SUMMARY: JUNE 9, 1987

The proposed WAUG Charter of Organization was ratified by a unanimous vote of all members present. Two changes were accepted by the membership present at the meeting. "The impeachment of an officer can only be achieved by a 2/3 vote of the quorum of members." There was also a clarification of the officer election procedure in how to resolve a "No-Clear-Winner" situation.

The first official election of WAUG officers was held. Here are the winners of these 'hotly contested' positions.

President	Mike Olin
Vice President	Pattie Snyder-Rayl
Secretary	Doug Feldman
Treasurer	Bob Carlini
Newsletter Editor	Bill Rayl
8-bit Librarian	Mike Pieronek
ST Librarian	Bruce Urbanski

According to the WAUG Charter, all officers are voting members of the Executive Board (EB). The EB will meet during August to make plans for future meeting activities. The EB will also discuss arrangements for suitable facilities for the September meeting.

The retiring Treasurer, Doug Feldman, presented his final membership and financial status report. There were 39 active members in WAUG. This did not include 3 memberships which expired as of the June meeting.

Doug explained to the membership that the reasonably healthy financial situation was primarily due to the convenient use of Wines Elementary School for meetings this year. Starting in September, we should expect to pay $25 or more for room rental fees.

Members commented that the Wines Teacher's Lounge was not large enough to conveniently

seat more than 30 - 35 persons. Pattie Snyder-Rayl volunteered to investigate meeting arrangements at E.M.U. Bob Parker volunteered to investigate arrangements at U.M.

Finally, the Annual Flea Market was held at 8:30 pm. Most WAUG members seemed to enjoy purchasing each others unwanted hardware/software at bargain hunter prices. The most common equipment for sale seemed to be Atari cassette recorders (3) followed by Atari 1025 printers (2). Doug Feldman was especially delighted to purchase the Atari Logo Programming Cartridge. He promises a complete review for the September Newsletter. In between demos of newly purchased 8-bit software, Mike Pieronek was working furiously to copy 8-bit library disks for several members.

This very hectic meeting ended with a large turnout at our monthly gathering of 'AFTER-WAUG', held at the Cottage Inn.

See you all in September!!!

WAUG
WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

HOW TO JOIN WAUG

Come to a meeting. WAUG memberships are $10.00 for 10 meetings. Renewals are $5.00. WAUG members receive a mailed copy of our newsletter each month and are able to buy disks for $2.00 from our 8-Bit disk library ($5.00 for our new ST library).

HOW TO CONTACT WAUG !!!

TREASURE CHEST BBS: 313-439-2816 (1200/300)
CLEAR THINKING BBS: 313-761-2444 (1200/300)
MOLIN'S DEN BBS: 313-420-0407 (1200/300)
By Mail: 39 W. Main #6, Milan, MI 48160

BITS AND PIECES

FROM THE

Battle Creek Atari User Group

C.E.S. REVIEW
by Chuck Steele

Well the long hot days of summer are here again. Some of us are out swimming or boating or watering our lawns... or fun things like mowing the grass. If it's too hot, some of us come indoors and play around on the computer.

Last month I took in the C.E.S. show in Chicago to see what was happening in Atari land. The good news was that Atari had the biggest exhibit for home computers. The theme of their exhibit was Fly with Atari. A pretty young lady gave me a pair of Atari Wings and if I had stayed in line I could have flown the ST! Atari had a projection TV set up with a cockpit mock-up of a Piper 181 Cherokee. The controls were wired into an ST. The effect as you sat in the cockpit was very much like being in the real thing. Of course the software was the new Flight Simulator from SubLOGIC. Flight Simulator II is one of my favorite programs on my 8 is enough machine.

Atari also had the tunnel of game machines. I walked through it, and my heart didn't skip any beats. Hey what can I say, game machines are.... game machines. However most of us in the clubs have COMPUTERS!! So now I'm out of the tunnel and in the world of ST's. The whole rear of the booth was STs. They even had the new IBM clone! But it wasn't running. Sam Tramiel walked up and was looking at the clone and about that time the crowd pushed me back. It was crowded. I looked around to see any 8 bit machines. Off in a lonely corner and almost forgotten was a 130XE running the planetarium program. (Sigh)

Now for the bad news. Next I thought I would browse around the software vendor booths and see what was new. Saw IBM software, saw Apple software, saw TRS software, even saw Commodore stuff and they didn't even show up in Chicago. I had to look pretty hard to find some Atari software. It was a little scary. Is Atari being boycotted? Sure looked that way to me.

Anyway.... I still like my 8 bit, but all this has made me re-read the Last Hacks from the June issue. I wonder, maybe I should look at that old ANALOG #44! Well if I go on any longer we will be into religious philosophy. So till next time... many happy bits.

BCAUG OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN:		
	Chuck Steele	964-1701
LIBRARIAN:		
	Todd Harris	965-5354
NEWSLETTER:		
	Tom Siemietkowski	963-4475
SECRETARY:		
	Mike Engle	964-3033
TREASURER:		
	Josephine Yeager	968-8401
MEMBERSHIP:		
	Dennis Martin	962-1024
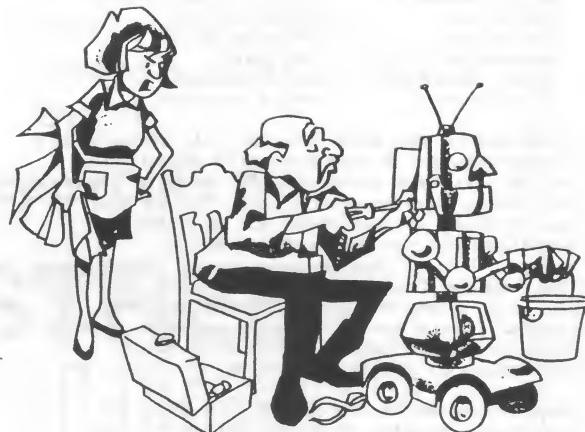
"You'll go to any extreme to avoid taking out the garbage, won't you?"

Meeting Minutes

During our June meeting we spent considerable time discussing the possibility of selling ads for the newsletter. We are looking for someone to chair a committee to be in charge of this project. It was felt this would be the best way to keep the dues cost down. The alternative is to raise our dues by several dollars annually.

As you saw in the last newsletter we have decided not to meet in July and August but are looking forward to seeing you at our September meeting.

I am interested in getting together with a few fellow GRASS members and visiting the meetings of the other Atari clubs in the area. Why not all bring our calendars to the September meeting and we will set something up! Maybe we can steal some good ideas to try to make our club meetings a little more profitable for everyone.

I see it is possible to rent libraries from other clubs.... perhaps we could get some help and do that this fall and add to our library!

Be thinking of some good ideas to bring to the September meeting and have great summer!

"With this computer, I'm interconnected with all other gurus, so I can give you a more reliable version of truth."

Presidential Address

by DANIEL YOUNGS

June! Summer time, sun, beach, outdoors, maybe the computer dosn't get as much attention this time of year as it does other times. I am writing this letter before our meeting again! It seems as though this is getting to be a habit... So I'll tell you what I THINK we will discuss at this month's (LAST month when you read this!) meeting.

*Lloyd Keller will do a demo on Silent Service.

*We are going to take a summer break in the month of July and August. Our attendance has been down and we feel that we won't have very many people at our meetings. So NO MEETING in July and August!

*I just talked to Frank, and it seems as though our BBS will be in operation by this weekend (with a little luck!) so we should have a number for you soon.

*If you have dues that are due please pay them we are having alot of people that are not up to date and the club needs the money to pay for our news letter and BBS. If you know anyone that has an Atari computer but not member of the club lets get them signed up!

*From what I understand the library is done. Steven should have it at the meeting for your pleasure!

*We will have the latest Analog Disk and we will also have Turbo Basic and a copy of GRIP for the disk of the month. If you don't have Turbo basic you are missing a great program. I have done away with Atari Basic and am using only Turbo, it's great!

See ya there!

GKAUG meets on the second Saturday of the month (taking the summer off... will start again in September) at 11:00 . Our meetings are held at Kalamazoo College in Dewing Hall the Dues are $20.00 per year. Daniel Youngs, GKAUG PRESIDENT, 388-3164

TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

NEXT MEETING: The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

ELECTIONS MEETING RESCHEDULED INTO AUGUST!
August 8th at 2:00 pm.

***   ***

OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:
LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec.	792-6029
Al Jennings	8-bit Disk Lib.	790-1980
Lance Middleton	ST Disk Librarian	
Ron Hoffman	Assistant ST Disk Lib.	

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks AT NO CHARGE if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8-bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8-bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

Presidential Address

OK, everybody had their time off (no meeting in JUNE) and not enough at the JULY meeting to have the ELECTIONS, so ELECTIONS are RESCEDULED for AUGUST. The people chosen will be leading the club for the next year, so SHOW UP and put in your two cents worth! If you don't like the way things are being done, then volunteer yourself... you're sure to like the way things are when YOU are in charge!

The offices open for nomination for TAG are:

President Secretary/Treasurer 8-bit Disk Librarian ST Disk Librarian Editor

In particular, we are looking for a new ST disk librarian, as Lance now has other commitments, and an Editor for the newsletter. The Editor would be responsible for writing the Hot Flashes and Relics to Relish and for organizing the newsletter (I would still supply the Presidential Address if I'm still president after elections) and the ST Notes column).

Also, anyone interested in writing a regular 8-bit column (you need a modem to transfer it to the Editor) please feel free to volunteer.

If you read the MAM June issue very carefully you may have noticed something new. There is now a classified ad section which is available FREE to all members. The only rules are that the article being sold must be computer related, and the ad must be to me no later than the 20th of the month.

HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE!

The month of July will find TAG taking a look at the various methods of backing up software. While TAG does not condone the illegal copying or pirating of software, we do feel that legitimate users should be able to exercise the right to back up 0their software. There are many products on the market that simply don't do the job, and many users get ripped off from false claims and advertisements.

On the 8-bit side, Al Jennings will demo the Happy Backup system (a hardware mod to 810's and 1050's) and a program called Chipmunk (a software program that backs up software on ANY drive). The 1050 Happy has other benefits such as: true double density support, increased speed (7X"), and support for most ram disks.

For the ST's, LeRoy Valley will demo Procopy (the all new version 1.40) and ST Copy 7.0. Both of these packages are software only and seem to handle almost every copy protection

scheme currently in use. So come on out to the
July meeting and find out how to protect your
valuable software!

Remember, once your membership expires you'll
receive NO more issues of the Michigan Atari
Magazine! Renew your membership now!

*** E B V ***

8-bit Equipment Volunteers:

Al Jennings 1050 Happy drive Char Davis Atari
800 Marty Schmidt Monitor

ST Equipment Volunteers:

LeRoy Valley Monitor Dan Barrowman 520 ST Paul
Bork Disk Drive

Once again, a big THANKS to all of you who loan
your equipment to the club. PLEASE, if you're
scheduled to bring equipment and you're going
to be late, or can't make it, CALL ME!! It's
not fair to the rest of the people when there's
no monitor, or drive for the system!

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Ron Hoffman       Assistant ST Disk Lib.
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Viewpoint

IS THE ATARI 8-BIT DEAD?
by Tom Siemietkowski
(B.C.A.U.G.)

Everything we read today in magazines,
periodicals and newsletters is Atari 8-bit, as
a computer, is DEAD.

How dead it is, is up to the individual
computer owner. I have owned mine for about 5
years and have dabbled in basic programming,
word processing, spreadsheeting, graphics and
some gaming. I have been a very active member
in my users group for about that long a time.
I have seen members come and go, some for a
long spell and many for a meeting or two and
disappear. Actually I am quite comfused about
what people want from this phenomenon called
the computer.

For the money, this is by far the all around
best computer (not game machine) on the market.
About 10 years ago when this computer came
out, there were many on the market that have
all but disappeared and yet the Atari survives.
Let me change that word survives. I mean
flourishes, if we look at it in the correct
perspective. Of all you Atari owners out
there, how many of you are very proficient at
all its capabilities? I would venture to
say--very, very few. What do want out of your
Atari computer? Is it dead or dying because it
cannot do what you want it to do; is it dead or
dying because the new expensive 16-bit machines
are faster with better graphics; or is it dead
or dying because you have heard there will be
no new software on the market?

This 8-bit machine will do anything the average
computer owner will ask of it; join a user
group and ask them if they have some software
and you will find out there is enough to keep
just about anyone out there busy for many years
to come. Even if there was never one more
piece of software written, there would be more
than enough around for all of us for many
years. By adding a printer to an existing
computer and disk drive, a whole new world will
open to you with just a handful of public
domain programs. That would be an output of
about $250.

As I said before, I am confused. "What do you
want that this computer can't give you, without
spending all that extra money for a big new
one?" There is nothing wrong with up-grading
or starting with a bigger system. The idea of
death for the 8-bit will not be.

Dead is dead only if you let it die; there is a
lot out there. Just look and ask what you
want to do.

▗▄▄▄▄FEATURE SECTION▄▄▄▄▄

𝖠 Atari News

ATARI at the SUMMER CES
By Jerry Cross (G.A.G.)
with Mike Simpson and Mike Lechkun (MAGIC)
and John Nagy (C.H.A.O.S.)

(Most of this article is JERRY'S. All the
references to "I" refer to him. This article
is condensed from 3 separately prepared
articles.)

Under the motto "FLYING HIGH", ATARI had the
ONLY first-line comuter manufacturer's booths
at the sprawling CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW.

Chicago' McCORMICK NORTH, McCORMICK CENTER
HOTEL, McCORMICK NORTH, and AMERICANA CONGRESS
HOTEL were all filled with electric dreams May
31-June 2. Telephones and VCR's took the most
floorspace, and just about anything else you
can think of filled in the remainder.

The CES is where manufacturers and major
distributers of anything electronic ("for the
home") woo retailers and show new products.
This year, COMPUTERS WERE OUT. Other than
ATARI, only a few CLONEs were represented,
notabley the ARMSRTRAAD and BLUE CHIP.
Printers were even MORE out. You could BOWL in
the several printer-manufacturer's booths. The
CES is for FUN stuff, and this year, computers
are appearantly NO FUN.

EXCEPT for ATARI. The MEGA series STs were NOT
shown, nor the LASER PRINTER, becuase they were
too "upscale" for the CES, but two ATARI
PC-CLONEs on display (perhaps to prove that
they do indeed exist!) showed how to be BLUE
COMPATIBLE and still not stuffy. But overall,
the ATARI display was all about FUN.

Was it worth it? Driving on the Chicago
Interstate system to get there? You know, it's
such an exciting ride, they make you pay
admission (they call it a toll). It's just
like riding the bumper cars at Cedar Point!
It's just as scary too!"

Yes, it's worth it. It's like a circus there.
Everywhere you look there are new toys to play
with. Just look at the Atari booth! A
two-story booth with a real Cesna Skyhawk
airplane parked on top of it. There is even a
cockpit in the lower section! They are putting
visitors in this cockpit and running the Flight
Simulator II (on an ST) and letting excited
would-be pilots fly it! And just a few booths
over, Microprose was showing their new Gunship
program (on an IBM) with a real Link Flight
Training Simulator! What some folks will do to
get attention!

As usual, ATARI had space for third party
software developers, although less than last
year. Tom Harker of ICD had a central spot,
showing the impressive line of 8-bit products
like the MIO and P:R: CONNECTION. SHELBOURNE
SOFTWARE was showing their prototype 3-D ST
BREAKOUT, using the STEREOTEK 3-D glasses. This
was my first opportunity to use the glasses,
and although the flicker was distracitng, the
effect was everything you could hope for.
HYBRID ARTS had a major MIDI-MUSIC demo going
on a stage of their own, and included a furry
robot that appeared to play the keyboards and
sing as the music ran.

The exibit was one of the most densely
populated in the show, although it might have
been caused more by people STAYING to enjoy the
display than by TRAFFIC. Either way, ATARI
made a very good impression on the
entertainment-minded CES crowd.

People representing Atari at their booth were
again members of the Chicago user groups, third
party software reps, and occasionally someone
from Atari themselves. It was hard to tell who
you were talking to because all wore name
badges stating they were from Atari. Some
pretty wild responses were heard by these
reporters from some of the people (although not
as wild as some of the comments from Neil
Harris...more on that later).

First, a few more shots at Atari and their new
1200 baud modem (yes, again!). I had a heated
argument with one of Atari's development folks
that went something like this:

ME: Why did you guys decide to use a handler
that was not compatable with the 850-type
handler, which is just about the standard for
Atari's 8-bit computers?

Atari: Any program written for the 850 will
work with our modem.

ME: HUH? That's not what Neil said before.

Atari: Well, all you have to do is append the
handler we include with the communication kit
with your program and it will work just fine.

ME: That's just the point! What if I wanted to
use a M/L or commercial program with it? The
850 handler is already built in, and there is
no way to use these programs without a lot of
hassle.

Atari: Then those companies will have to modify
the program to work.

ME: But it would have been easier to just
design your modem to use an 850-type handler!

Atari: The kit will come already packaged with
an excellent terminal program, so there is no
need to use other term programs. Keith
Ledbetter has re-written EXPRESS to work.

ME: But what if I wanted to use BBS EXPRESS,
BBCS, or some other BBS program? What about
other public domain programs?

Atari: It's not our fault if they don't want to
release the source code so people can modify
the programs.

ME: Stick to the point...Why not just use....

Atari: But we don't need to! Any program that
works with the 850 will work with the new modem
by simply using our handler.

ME: AAARRRGGGGHHH!

At this point I decided to go over to the Adult
Video section and cool off (which is the WRONG
place to go if you want to cool off!).

Later on, I had a discussion with a very well
informed source about the modem. It seems that
the modem is only 50% Hayes compatable when
used directly with the Atari (using their
cables and handler). It seems it does not
support the DTR pin, and has many other flaws.
So, if you have been waiting for this modem
with the hopes of saving money by not buying an
interface, think again! You will have to do
without many of the Hayes features, and forget
using it for a BBS!

If you've noticed our negative slant so far, we
must apologise. But after talking to other
Atari users coming from the booth we couldn't
help but notice that a lot of our feelings were
shared with other fellow Atarians. There were
some good things to come out of the booth. On
top of the bi-leveled booth rested a Commanche
aircraft, wing span and all. You had to get a
boarding pass from one of the lovely Atari
flight attendants (another nice thing about the
booth). But that's not what you were going up
there for. You were there to see...
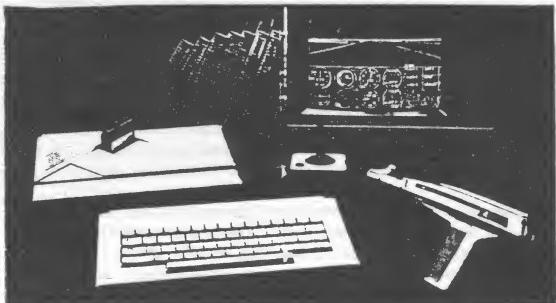
... the brand new Atari XE Game System (XEGS).
A sleekly styled grey unit with round pastel
buttons for reset, option, select, and start.
The once optional-now standard keyboard is
physically separate from the game unit. This
is the lap top keyboard many of us have been
waiting for! The help key is on the keyboard,
separated from the other function keys. The
XEGS is essentially a redesigned 65 XE
computer. The XEGS will run all standard
peripherals, but has no parallel bus. As Mike
L. went up to see the unit, there was a hub-bub
of activity below. Was this because a member
of MAGIC was here to see it? Nope, just VP
Michael Katz escorting the Toys R Us delegation
up for a first class demonstration and some
major league arm twisting...we saw a good show
and the TRU people left the "hanger" smiling.

With the XEGS comes Flight Simulator, Bug
Attack (packaged with light pistol), and
Midnight Magic pinball, each in cartridge form.
Flight Simulator is on Atari's new 128K super
bank select cartridge. A 256K cart is also in
the works. These carts and accesories will be
available to computer owners about 6 months

after the release of the XEGS. Atari has acquired the rights to many software titles which will also be released on cartridge format (Choplifter, Archon, Ball Blazer to name a few).

ATARI expects to spend MILLIONS of dollars this fall in advertising the XE SYSTEM (even in comic books), as well as a major TV push for the ST. The commercials were running full time on a few of the DOZENS of monitors recessed in the booth walls. The ST ads attack the MACINTOSH directly and are also aggressive in PC comparisons. The XE ads dwell on the huge existing base of software for the ATARI, and HINT that under the cover you might even find a usable computer.

On to other stuff, Atari was showing a new monitor (for the 8-bit's) called the XE1411. It is a color monitor, and is similar to the ST monitors. However, there is no plans to put this monitor into production. It seems their R&D department wanted to bring it to the show to see what the response was. I think it would be a swell idea for dedicated 8-bitters to spiffy up their systems. If you have a 130XE, you have a miss-match setup already (grey 130XE computer, black and white disk drive, some other color monitor). With the new Atari disk drives, the new monitor will make your desk look much more professional.

The new 80-column card was also shown, however there is still problems with the Atari-Writer 80 program. This program is still not complete, and will probably not be ready when the card shows up in stores. Also, the Silent Partner-80 program is still in the testing stage, and also will not be ready. Although this card is your only current way to get 80-column support on your 8-bit, I'm still not impressed with it.
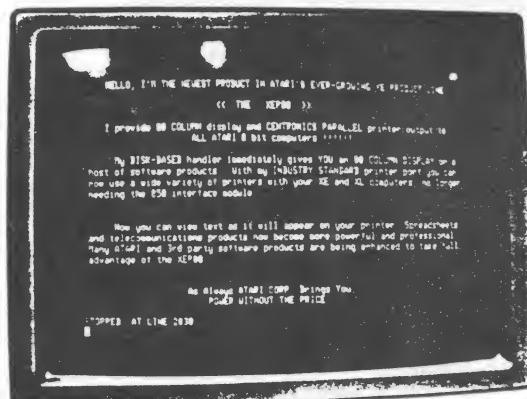
What really worries me about Atari's push of the game machine is the incredable showing that Nintendo received at the show. Not only did Nintendo have the biggest booth at McCormic North, there were several companies showing new games that support their system. There is also a new magazine available dedicated to the Nintendo machine, and if that's not enough, Sharp was showing a television set with a built-in Nintendo game machine! Is Atari really trying to compete against these guys for the computer game market?

Atari also pulled a surprise by showing a new disk drive. Called the XF551, this drive will support single/dual double density for a maximum storage of 360k. It will come with a new dos called A-DOS, being written by Bill Wilkenson. But there was a rumor that this drive was having some trouble working with protected disks. The price for this drive is supposed to run about the same as the 850 drives.

Atari was also showing their 2600 game machine, with several new games. These include Desert Falcon, Boxing, Crossbow, Solaris, Qbert, and Cracked.

New for the 7800 machine is One-on-One, Hat Trick, Summer Games, Gato, Team Wrestling, Karateka, and ChopLifter.

Xanth announced that their Midi-Maze game is finally complete and will be released in a couple of weeks for $79.95. Depending on the response (and if it's not pirated to death) they will release an update to include modem support!

Epyx was showing several new games, but none were for the Atari. Maybe it's time for another letter writing campaign, eh? Included in their new releases are California Games, with surfing, skateboarding, and other "in-crowd" games, and Street Sports Basketball.

That's about all, since most of the other new products are reviewed elsewhere in the newsletter. My overall view of the show is bad news for the 8-bit users. I saw very few new software offerings, and no hardware at all, other than the new disk drive and the "old" new Atari products.

As for the ST, things are certainly much brighter. The MIDI music field is exploding with new products, and it seems every new show I attend has something new in software. The announcement of a 4-meg, no-soldering upgrade is certainly welcome news to us 10-thumb'ed hackers. And there was talk of more CAD programs coming soon too. Just listening to what can be done with these programs are exciting!

An unexpected ATARI exibit was some distance from the rest... HARTECH LTD. was displaying their line of ATARI CALCULATORS! Headed by former ATARI Vice President of Sales [. . .] HARRIS, HARTECH has licensed the NAME from ATARI, but has NO other affiliation. This might be a trend— we might see MORE unrelated products with the ATARI name and FUJI logo.

Many ATARI ST machines were seen in other exibits, notably the COMPUTER SOFTWARE SERVICE booths, SOFT-KAT, and others. Overall, the ST seemed to be represented about evenly with IBM-ish machines and slightly more than the AMIGA machines in third-party booths. Conversation with the developers showed no clear preference between the AMIGA and ST, only that both are really heating up in the commercial software marketplace. Expect MUCH more for BOTH machines to be coming. ATARI clearly is staying in the FUN marketplace... while separately attacking the SERIOUS market, more often represented at the COMDEX shows rather than the CES shows. Reports from the COMDEX (running almost concurrently with CES in a terrible timing blunder) said that the MEGA STs and LASER PRINTERS should see plenty of sales action in the coming months, and the

successful IBM EMULATION package from AVANT GUARDE should make more inroads in the office/business markets.

During the show the emulator question came up again. As we left the booth after the second night of the show, we noticed a crowd gathering around MichTron's cubicle in Atari's booth. Was a new game being shown? A new database? Nope, just Leonard Tramiel and Neil Harris, Marketing Director of Atari, playing around with the Commodore C-64 emulator. Their comments (VERBATIM) go as follows:

NH: "...is that the same dork that wrote the one for the 800?"

LT: "No, a different one...this one's from England."

NH: "...he's ripping us off..."

LT: "if he tries to release this, he's in for big trouble..."

Sounds like fond Commodore sentiments still exist in their hearts, eh?

On Monday night, the local Atari club, CLAUG, held a special CES meeting for their club members and out-of-town Atarians. In attendance were many of the top Atari folks, and executives from companies supporting Atari like Hybrid arts, Antic, and Zanth. Neil Harris spoke to the group, and had these comments on the Atari 800 emulator:

NH: (laughter) "...Darek Mihocka [author of this emulator] has been a real pain in the (pause, followed by more laughter). We tried to talk to that little twirp, but..."

Given the opportunity to open the ST to another two whole worlds of existing software, this is the attitude that Atari chooses to take. Surprisingly, Atari has given its reluctant

blessing to release of the 800 emulator with OS and Rev. C basic modules intact, providing the source code is also released. A bidding war was rumored to have been won by ANALOG.
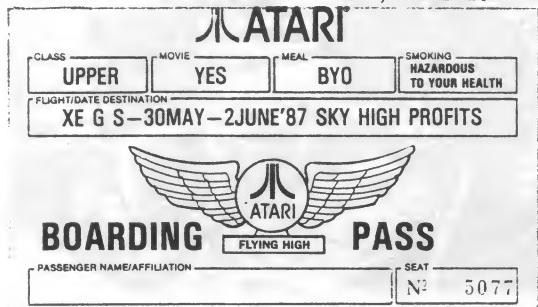
```
┌──────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│              ⅄ ATARI                           │
│ ┌CLASS──┐ ┌MOVIE┐ ┌MEAL┐ ┌─SMOKING────────┐  │
│ │ UPPER │ │ YES │ │BYO │ │  HAZARDOUS     │  │
│ │       │ │     │ │    │ │  TO YOUR HEALTH│  │
│ └───────┘ └─────┘ └────┘ └────────────────┘  │
│ ┌FLIGHT/DATE DESTINATION───────────────────┐ │
│ │ XE G S—30MAY—2JUNE'87 SKY HIGH PROFITS   │ │
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│              FLYING HIGH                       │
│  BOARDING    ⅄ATARI    PASS                    │
│                                                │
│ ┌PASSENGER NAME/AFFILIATION─┐   ┌SEAT───────┐ │
│ │                           │   │ Nº  5077  │ │
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```

Industry Report

"Okay, all those letters this month from Antic readers have convinced us there's still an 8-bit Atari market out there," said Springboard Software president John Paulson at his company's CES booth. "You'll be glad to know that Springboard has now started work on an 8-bit Atari version of Newsroom.

Newsroom is a popular entry-level page layout program for easy newsletters. Springboard is already showing an ST version of their Certificate Maker here, this product is currently shipping.

Good news for Atari graphics users who have been trying to find a touch tablet. Suncom's Animation Station for XL/ XE is now available. The included software provides many pre-drawn pictures as well as automatic shape generation. The tablet can be used in place of joysticks or paddles to control any standard Atari software, according to Suncom.

Strategic Simulations Inc. had extra reason for celebrating at their suite, high above the Chicago River. Last week they signed a contract with TSR to start the first computer versions of the original Dungeons and Dragons games. You should be able to play D&D on your Atari by Christmas.

Datasoft, now being released through Electronic Arts, has two welcome 8-bit titles due out before July. Video Title Shop ($29.95) lets you create colorful animated sequences with graphics and moving text -- which can be transferred to your videorecorder tape via standard electronics cables. Video Title Shop includes the Micro- Painter Plus paint program and a library of built-in borders and screen images. Scrolling, position-changes, fadeouts and a whole range of video special effects are supported. A second disk of video "clip art" for the program will also be released this year.

Also from Datasoft at $29.95 is the second installment of Alternate Reality -- The Dungeon -- which seems to play much faster and more conveniently, with less disk swapping than the earlier installment of this large-scale graphics adventure game.

Most of the unreleased software on display at CES was promised for shipment by early summer. One of the few new packages I was actually able to bring back for review is...Virtuoso. This is the long-evolving music/graphics storyboard system that Antic previewed almost two years ago. The XL/XE version is $49.95 and the ST version is reportedly well along in development.

ST NEW PRODUCT ROUNDUP

What looked like a very powerful and easy-handling 2-D drafting and drawing program was being demonstrated by Xetec of Salina, Kansas (makers of the Grafix AT which has been reviewed in Antic). SCAD gives you pages for 16 ST drawings in RAM. All commands can be operated from GEM or from the keyboard. The $99.95 program is due in September and will not be copy-protected. Page sizes can be defined as large as 32 X 32 inches and many powerful graphics editing tools are built-in. SCAD can convert images into DEGAS format. We'll also be reviewing Xetec's new Printer Enhancer, a $249.95 buffer/switcher with 8 built-in type fonts.

Passport Designs, a leading MIDI software house, is rushing to convert its first ST product -- Master Tracks Pro, a high-powered, user-friendly 64-track sequencer that has been winning rave reviews on the Macintosh this spring. The Passport CES team told Antic that three out of four visitors to their booth wanted this product on the ST instead of the Mac.

Another specialized new use for the ST is to run a graphics database for serious chessplayers. SciSys of London is showing two versions of ST ChessBase -- the software that current World Champion Garry Kasparov has been using to prepare himself four tournaments.

With Chessbase Sr., every recent tournament

game of an upcoming opponent can be fed into
the database and instantly examined from a vast
variety of viewpoints to pinpoint potential
weak points of play. You can see how an
opponent reacts to any standard style of
opening or strategy. ChessBase Jr. works with
the expensive Leonardo world-class chess
computer and the ST. U.S. distribution for all
these products was being finalized at CES.

An add-on to PrintMaster Plus, the Print Shop
workalike from Unison World, will be a Fonts
and Borders disk. Price is not yet set.

GAME GALLERY

Mindscape, which hosted a Sunday rock oldies
concert for 1,000 (Bo Diddley, Sam & Dave)
showed two $29.95 ST color games designed in
England. Q-Ball is a 3-D billiards game played
inside a cube where you can adjust the gravity
and line up your shots off any wall. Plutos is
a shootout where your rocket flies over the
scrolling surface of the huge enemy mothership
and attempts to destroy it.

From England's Psygnosis, creators of the
visually awesome graphic adventure game
Brataccas, comes another lushly-detailed
extravaganza. Barbarian moves a Conan-type
hero through an a vast, scrolling underground
kingdom -- color only -- where monsters and
hordes of enemy guards must be overcome on
every screen.

Electronic Arts is starting to crank out some
ST titles too. An enhanced version of Music
Construction Set -- with MIDI -- is due in July
for $39.95. Other new features are direct
waveform editing and a jukebox playback mode.

EA has also taken over distribution of the
First Byte talking ST software. First releases
are MathTalk, a flashy arithmetic drill for
youngsters, and a talking computer version of
Mad Libs, the poplular series of humor books
where you add inappropriate words to prepared
storylines.

Still more from Electronic Arts, a kind of
super- Diplomacy strategy game called Empire,
where you conquer weaker parts of the world and
force them to build weapons and raise new
armies for your war machine. But your enemies
are just as ruthless, and you can also start
the game by re- drawing the map of the world to
suit your own tastes.

Logical Design Works has a whole line of
fast-moving ST gambling simulations for $34.95
each. Vegas Gambler combines blackjack,
roulette, slot machine and poker machine.
Other titles available are Vegas Craps and Club
Backgammon.

From Canada Jagware is making its ST debut with
Alien Fires, a color-only 3-D space maze
arriving this summer.

AVATEX 2400 BAUD MODEM

Avatex, well-known for its low-priced
Hayes-compatible modems, now has a speedy 2400
baud unit. List price is $319 but previous
Avatex modems have been dramatically
discounted.

Hardware

DETAILS ON THE XF551
by John Nagy (C.H.A.O.S.)
(All photos also by John Nagy)
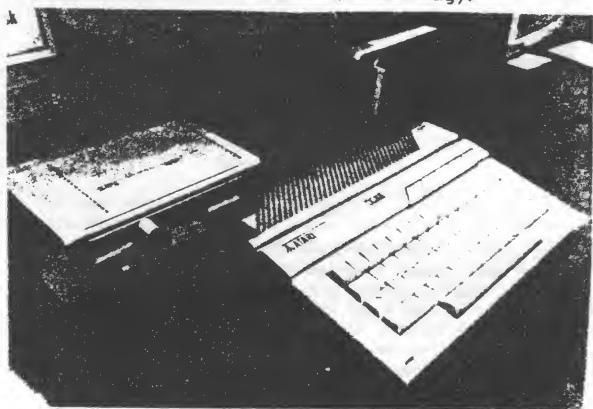
The new XF551 DISK DRIVE is a sleek new gray
box about 1/2 the size of the 1050 it will
replace, and is actually styled more to match
the PC-CLONE than the XE. That's not
surprizing, as the same drive unit is used in
the clone. It will be almost 360K, using a
true double sided double density disk format,
plus a modified system that will almost triple
the read/write speed. It will be shipped with
"ADOS", a new disk operating system from OSS
INC, the people that brought you DOSXL, BASIC
XE, ACTION, etc. ADOS will be able to read DOS
2 and the alien "density-and-a-half" of DOS 2.5
as well as its own disks, but will not be
backwards-compatible. ADOS should be usable in
older ATARI compatible drives, and may be
marketed separately as well. Features include
subdirectories and optional menus. It sounds a
lot like SPARTADOS from ICD CORP.

Although it is scheduled for summer release,
NEIL HARRIS and other ATARI officials admitted
that the XF551 was having some trouble being

fully compatible with some disk protection schemes in common useage, and might be delayed some time to work it and other points out. The new drive eliminates both the 1050 and any plans for a 3.5" 8-bit disk drive, heavily rumored for the last nine months.

Already, the new drive has triggered speculation of interchangability with the ST. Since the XF551 is basically a PC external drive already, hopes are being voiced that the ATARI PC and the ST will have interchangable drives, allowing access to 5.25" disks (as in PC EMULATION) for the ST, and to 3.25" ST drives for the PC. NEIL HARRIS, head of ATARI product information, confirmed that the interfaces were to be identical, and "mix and match" would be very possible, depending perhaps on your DOS. HOPEHOPEHOPE.

Programming

THE FORTH STAGE-
A LEARNING GUIDE
by Ed Crisler (A.L.E.)
(part 3)

Once upon a time (around the late 60's) there was a man named Charles H. Moore that was fed up with the existing programming languages of the time. I bet you can't guess what language he created.

I have always found the history of FORTH to be very interesting, so I thought I'd cover part of it this time around.

FORTH is unique in that it is the only language not produced by a development team, but rather by a single man, Charles Moore. The first actual use of FORTH was in 1971 when Moore wrote a program for a radio telescope. In 1973, due to the growing demand for his language, Moore create FORTH Inc. The language is unique in yet another fashion, it is the only language that is written in itself. Oh yes, earlier versions are written in other languages but the newer versions of FORTH are written in FORTH.

Let's start this session of with something of great importance, the screen editor. If you have already read the doc section on the editors use, you have probably found it no help at all. Let's start from scratch— why do you want the editor? It allows you to save screens of definitions that you only need at specific times. To use it is easy.
1) Find an empty screen on your disk.

2) Put the screen into the editor using the UE command. (eg. 10 UE)

3) Clear the screen by using the WIPE command.

You now have an empty screen to save your definitions on, so, "NOW WHAT?" you ask. And a very good question to, if I might add. Use the arrow keys to move the cursor up onto the screen. You will notice a command put on the screen ;S. This tells FORTH that the screen is finished and to stop compiling. Move this to the last line of the screen. This way anything you save here can be added to your language by loading the screen number (eg. 10 load). Once you have finished with your definitions, move the cursor down to the DOIT statement and press return, this puts you back in command mode. To save the finished screen type FLUSH , to end without saving type FORTH. The other commands given in the docs are very easy to understand.

Did anyone figure out the reason for the first DUP in my example last time? I'll give you a while longer to ponder it.

What I will explain today is the ' ." ' command. This command is very similar to BASIC's print statement. Be sure to put a space after the command before you enter what you want to print. When your message is finished you close the command with a " you do not need a space before this command.

You may have noticed that all the print was put together on the same line, similar to the semi-colon used by a BASIC print. FORTH assumes you want the print to continue on the same line to make it move on you use the CR command.(eg. ." this is a test" CR) Any time that a CR command is encountered FORTH does a carriage return.

Perhaps it's time for a brief explanation of FORTH's logic. As you must have noticed in the first examples (DIR etc...) I called words that I had just defined. The reason is that in FORTH you design the program by writing many small modules and calling them, rather than one big program. This makes it much easier to make an error free program as you can test each of the small module as they are finished.

```
: SQUARE DUP * . ;
```

Let's say we have already defined the above word. We now want to create a word that will return the cube of a number. A programmer in any other language might do it as:

```
: CUBE DUP DUP * * :
```

Which would work but would be considered unstructured code and will be a little slower than:

```
: CUBE DUP SQUARE * ;
```

This is how a good FORTH programmer would solve
the same problem. Always break the program
into as small of parts as possible. This is
not only easier to debug but it actually uses
memory more efficiently. The whole key to
programming in FORTH is to think in terms of
human logic rather than machine logic.

As you define each word of a program you are
slowly building a pyramid, that at it's top
will be the one word that executes the whole
thing.

Well, I'm about out of space so I'll leave you
with an example program and let you try to
figure it out on your own. I'll offer a full
explanation next time, until then, keep the
FORTH!

```
: SQRE DUP * . ;
: PRINT DUP . ." SQR IS " ;
: DATA 10 0 DO I PRINT SQRE CR LOOP ;
```

(Run the program by typing DATA.)

Review

ST NOTES by LeRoy Valley (TAG)

The age of 2400 baud modems is upon us, and
there are deals to be had everywhere! With
more and more BBS's supporting 2400 baud, the
cost of one of these lightning fast modems can
quickly be repaid from lower phone bills.
Since 2400 baud is now working very reliably, I
expect to see Genie, Compuserve, and Delphi
offering 2400 baud service at a local phone
number in the near future.

What does one of these babies cost, you might
ask? Take a guess. $600? No, too high.
$500? Lower, lower! $400? Well, rather than
keep you guessing, I'm going to blurt out the
answer...$199.99!! Yes, for $200, you can own
a full featured 300/1200/2400 baud modem. And
you can choose from three different modems!
Browsing through the latest issue of Computer
Shopper, I located three companies that are
selling 300/1200/2400 baud external modems for
$200. All three claim compatibility with the
Hayes AT command set. The three companies (and
their modems) are:

CEI 800-USA-DISK Supermodem 24 5 year warranty

Advanced Comp. Tech. 800-654-6464 Expert 24e
2 year warranty

USA Flex 800-USA-FLEX desktalk II 5 year
warranty-I ended up selecting the desktalk II
from USA Flex, because I have dealt with them
before and have been very pleased with their
service. Also, the desktalk II is fully
compatible with the Hayes AT command set...at
ALL speeds (there are some specific commands
for 2400 baud). While the other two may also
be compatible at all speeds, USA Flex was the
only one to mention it in their ad.

When I received the modem, something rattled
inside and I thought that it might be broke.
Upon further inspection I discovered that it
was the lithium battery bouncing around inside.
Pulling the modem apart, I quickly fixed this
problem. However, I did run into a problem
here. The manual does not mention a battery
anywhere, and also doesn't tell you how to pull
the modem apart! There aren't any screws, and
no fastening tabs! It turns out that the modem
is held together by friction on four plastic
posts. I admit that the case looks cheap, and
the construction is not the best...but it works
great and has a 5 year warranty. In fact I had
less problems downloading with this modem than
I had with a U.S. Robotics 2400 Courier (list
$595!).

It was while disassembling the unit that I
found some info that made me real glad that I
picked this modem. It is manufactured by
Incomm Data Systems who, by the way, also makes
the Incomm Turbo 2400 -- a very popular $400
modem that is upgradeable to 4800 and 9600 baud
(by a simple chip change) and offers MNP error
correction as an option (MNP error correction
is used by a large number of mainframes).
Placing a quick call to USA Flex, I found out
that this is simply the generic model of the
Turbo 2400. At half the price it sports all of
the features -- it's upgradeable and you can
get MNP error correction if so desired!

The desktalk II offers all of the
goodies...Auto answer, auto dial, help screen,
and 11 led's to tell you what's going on!
You've got led's for High Speed, Auto Answer,
Ring Indicate, OH, Carrier Detect, Transmit
Data, Receive Data, Request To Send, Clear To
Send, Data Terminal Ready, and Data Set Ready.
The back of the modem has two phone jacks for
line and phone, and also has four dip switches.
The dip switches allow you to set DTR and/or
CD/CTS/DSR permanently on, and also allow you
to set the modem for auto answer on the second
ring. (All of these parameters are also
software settable)

There is an internal speaker to allow you to
monitor the phone line while the connection is
being made, and the volume is software
adjustable. (Although I couldn't set it as low
as I would like to -- I don't want it off, but
0 is still a little too loud.) Nearly every

parameter, once set, can be saved in the non-volatile memory. (That's where the lithium battery comes in.)

It's capable of asynchronous AND synchronous communications, and supports both tone and pulse dialing! There's also a whole bunch of built in diagnostics that the user can run.

As an added bonus (It didn't excite me too much) you get a free communications package...for an IBM. TransMIT is actually a very nice looking piece of software, so maybe you could sell it to some IBM user and make a little money. It comes in a nice velour binder and looks very professional.

All in all, I would have to recommend the desktalk II to anyone looking for a new modem. At this price, I simply couldn't recommend a 1200 baud to anyone! Remember - It's got a 5 YEAR WARRANTY!

Oh, I forget to mention one other fact. When you buy it, USA Flex will refund your money to you in thirty days if you're not satisfied for any reason! How can you go wrong? Well see you next month, I've got to go burn some phone lines!!

Industry Report

Tom and Gerry Visit ICD
by Jerry Cross and Mike Lechkun

Oh well, Mike's lousy mouse joke at least got us in the door and to the receptionist. We entered an old textile factory on a bumpy road on the south side of Rockford, Illinois. The building's reduced demands allowed it to house small, emerging buisnesses. This is where ICD resides.

After the aforementioned bout with the receptionist, we were greeted by Marilyn, one of the executive secretaries, and were shown the main office. This office house other secretaries, accounting and art departments, and programmers. Sitting on a dresser in the middle of the room was a 520 ST, Courier 2400 modem, disk and hard drives--in short, the ICD BBS. That's where the fun started!

We were introduced to staff programmer Keith Ledbetter. Keith, of Express! fame, showed us his first products for his new employer. ICD Express! (we think that was the title) is an ST BBS program that will knock your socks off and send them across the room! It's really

that good! The program is a mixture of features found on 850 BBS Express! and some of the major on-line services. Written in a language composed by Keith (also to be released as soon as it is documented), ICD Express is a callers dream, yet not a Sysop's nightmare. In the download section, a user can scan the list of available files, or view each filename followed by a brief description. Arc'ed files can be un-arc'ed on-line to view the separate files contained in the master file. The sysop may set a variety of flags restricting/allowing different privledges to individual users. Standard X-modem, CRC X-modem, and Y-modem are the protocols supported. "Kermit's batching allows some users to type in "*.*" and download everything, and I'm not too keen on that," said Keith. 32 message bases can be created, with a maximum of 250 messages each containing 4000 bytes of information. This will cost you over a meg of memory, but that's the breaks--get a Mega ST when they come out! Thread following, tagged messages, and a new on-line text editor makes this message area complete.

I thought the suggested retail of $79.95 was reasonable, Jerry thought it a bit pricey. For ICD's first foray into the ST field, this seems an excellent product in the tradition that ICD has established.

After Mike got up off his knees in worship to Mr. Ledbetter, the tour moved on. Up an escalator and through a vacant machinery room we went. Marilyn left us in the capable hands of Brad, head of shipping/handling and production. Stacks of untested, incompleted MIO devices were about the room. Each MIO is tested from 9 to 24 hours for reliability before packaging and shipping. This commitment to quality along with ICD's excellent consumer support has forced them to expand three times within the warehouse. Surely a fourth expansion is eminant. When Jerry complained of a lack of quality service on non-ICD equipment in his area, Brad rather matter-of-factly said "send it in to us - Tom (Harker, ICD's President) will look at it." ICD routinely assists with all installation of their products at reasonable fees. ICD installs Rambo's (memory upgrades), and US Doublers (1050 drive enhancements) for $30 and $15...they'll look at user's equipment as well when their own product checks OK.

After being frisked for any free sample MIO's (just kidding), our tour had ended. In spite of the grubby factory style surroundings, ICD is a company committed to dependability to all Atari owners. This is one book you can't judge by the cover!

Review ST

REVIEW OF REGENT BASE
by Serge Vaillancourt
Excerpted from Faster Disk Magazine

REGENT BASE just became the fourth database
that I have used (or tried) on the ST. The
first was the obvious DB MASTER ONE, given to
me with the purchase of my 520 ST. Even though
it used the GEM features, it quickly found its
way into my "archives". Not that it was
unusable, but mainly because it didn't match my
needs. The second was H & D BASE. This one is
close enough to a professional database and
what's more, it is very similar to DBASE II
that is so well known in IBM circles. Not bad,
but the first versions were buggy. DB MAN is
the third, a DBASE III clone. "Now, here's
something interesting" I said to myself as I
adopted it.

The first things I look for in a database are:

- Ability to work with many databases
simultaneously;
- Inter-relation capacity between databases;
- Ability to create procedures;
- Printed output format editing and designing;
- Possibility of saving variables.

DB MAN satisfies all these requirements.
REGENT BASE is not as flexible but nevertheless
includes a good portion of these features. AND
it's much easier to use.

On the plus side, REGENT BASE runs under the
GEM environment and even the user created
databases can make use of GEM (mouse button
). REGENT BASE then allows for a better screen
layout and a much improved working space for
the end-user.

Another plus for REGENT BASE: it has its own
integrated text editor. With DB MAN, we have
to use a separate editor. To run a program or
procedure, one must load DB MAN in memory and
then run that program or procedure. If there
was an error, you have to load the editor, make
your corrections, re-load DB MAN, re-run,
etc... With REGENT BASE, after you've written
the program or procedure, you can call the
processor and run the program immediately. In
the case of an error, REGENT BASE brings you
back to the editor with the cursor resting on
the mistake.

REGENT BASE is sold with a 163 pages manual in
a 9" X 8" binder, which is very convenient with
an inside pocket where you find the REGENT BASE
diskette. The diskette contains the REGENT
BASE programs as well as two complete

applications that may be used as tutorials, but since they're so good, they will be very practical for some users.

The manual is split between three chapters and the index.

The first chapter called "GETTING STARTED" gives the information needed for a first run of REGENT BASE. It also contains a mini-manual for each one of the applications included in the package.

The manual is written in a reference book form (except for the first chapter) and those looking for a tutorial in the book will be deceived. People who have never used a database will have to read certain passages a few times and maybe even look for other information sources. But in general, the various items in the manual are clearly identified and you won't need to look around for a day and a half to find a desired passage.

The FORM EDITOR allows you to create or modify the database templates and the commands needed to activate it. The FORM EDITOR is made of two parts; one for creating fields and for the screen presentation, and the second which is nothing more than a text editor used to create the programs and procedures.

The first part is called the GEM OBJECT EDITOR and is used to create the design and the contents of the file. There are drop menus containing the various editing tools such as CUT, PASTE, the file manipulation tools, LOAD, SAVE. A sub-menu for designing the screen output contains the text effects and colors tools. Another sub-menu allows you to move between both parts of the FORM EDITOR.

The fields are edited with the help of the mouse to select the type of field (by clicking), position the field (by dragging) and to select the width of the field (by stretching the field's box).

CONCLUSION

If I compare it with my preferred database program (DB MAN), I can say that REGENT BASE lacks a bit of flexibility, meaning that DB MAN has a much larger language and is therefore capable of more detailed processing. However, I'm attracted by two things in REGENT BASE. It supports GEM in its working tools and also in its applications, and even though its language is less evolved than DB MAN's, it is no less efficient and easy to use.

Consequently, I don't think I would be making a mistake by saying that the casual users have

enough power to work with in REGENT BASE for their personal management. It might even be powerful enough for various professional users.

> REGENT SOFTWARE
> 7131 Owensmouth,
> suite 45A,
> Canoga Park,
> CA 91303
> (818) 882-2800

Review Eight

MIO MANIA: A PERSONAL REVIEW
by DOUG FELDMAN (WAUG)

(EDITORS NOTE: Although we ran a complete review of the MIO a few months ago here in MAM, Doug's experiences and observations answer several of the continuing most-asked questions about the "MUTI-INPUT-OUTPUT" device from ICD INC.)

After reading two very favorable reviews in Analog (march 87) and Antic (April 87), and seeing the big full page advertising, I could not resist. I decided to buy the MIO for my Atari 800XL. The first critical decision was which version to buy. The 256K MIO is $199 and the 1 meg MIO is approximately $325. Finally, I took the cheapskate approach. There is a big demand for these little wonders and ICD suggested that a mail order company or a local retailer may be able to supply one quicker, but I received it in little over a week.

My first experience after connecting it to the XL parallel bus and turning on the XL and the MIO was the horrible distortion of my video display. I have been using a 13 inch color TV (Zenith) all these years with respectable picture quality. But with the MIO connected, the picture quality was so distorted that I could hardly read the MIO command menu. For the next several days, my primary concern was trying to remedy this situation. Mike Olin told me that all was well with his MIO and XE using a home TV. ICD said they had primarily tested the MIO using monitors connected to the XL and XE. I did verify that the MIO and XL do send a very clear picture using a video monitor. From among many of the suggestions I collected over the next several days, one idea from Tim Grzechowski seemed to help the most. I have taken all the slack wire in the video output cable and wound it around an empty paper towel holder. This creates a kind of RF interference filter. Furthermore, I discovered that the exact placement of the video cable and the proximity to the telephone cable also play

an important part of the overall picture quality. I have described all this in extensive detail because the problem is very disturbing!!!

After two weeks of exploration, here are some of my discoveries using the MIO in various software applications:

First, the choice of DOS is critical to gain complete access to all the MIO features. Although ICD built it with SpartaDOS in mind, only Sparta version 3.2 will work when the MIO is connected. All other Sparta versions will cause complete loss of drive access after you boot up the system.

Second, Atari DOS 2.5 will not access the MIO Ramdisks. However, DOS 2.5 will allow the print spooler feature. I have quickly tested other DOS's and found that Atari DOS 2.0, SmartDOS 6.1 and MYDOS 4.0 will allow complete access to the MIO Ramdisks.

As far as I can tell, almost all dedicated software packages will at least access the print spooler feature. Thus, Print Shop will not access the extra Ramdisks, but you can allocate a very big print spooler and regain the Print Shop Editor menu about 1/2 of the way into a printout. I have experienced one bug thus far with Print Shop. If I choose an editor option requiring access to the disk drive (D1:) while the print spooler is completing a printout, the program seems to wait until the entire printout is finished before successfully accessing the drive.

I have unhappily discovered that the XM-301 version of BBS Express will not operate if the MIO is connected. I had hoped to use the MIO on the WAUG BBS. I have made several calls to talk to Keith Ledbetter about this (he now works at ICD). At first he thought it was a conflict between Sparta 3.2 and the modem handler. Then he decided there was a conflict between the MIO ROM and the BBS software. Apparently, there are no conflicts in his 850 version of the BBS. So, I guess I had bad luck on this application!

My most successful implementation of the MIO thus far is loading the AtariWriter Dictionary Disk into MIO D2:. Then when using AtariWriter Plus, I can select the Spell Checker module and have the Dictionary Disk online in MIO Ramdisk D2: The spell checking is very fast and must rival the speed of PaperClip XE. This configuration still leaves me a 64K print spooler on my 256K MIO. A small problem seems to be that MIO Ramdisk sectors are always double density. So, if you Scopy a single density disk (720 SD sectors) into a MIO Ramdisk, it will consume 720 DD sectors. This is a net waste of 92K Ram. ICD says that you cannot format the Ramdisk into single density disks.

I also discovered a very useful MIO utility on Compuserve. The MIO.ARC file contains ML routines to save your current MIO configuration to D1: A second utility will read the config file and reset the MIO. These utilities are conveniently executed from within a '.BAT' file (SpartaDOS).

I recently spoke to ICD and was told they are writing new ROMs for a future upgrade of the MIO. There are several reported bugs with the print spooler pointer and some problems have developed after extended periods of use.

As you can see, the marriage of the MIO and my XL has been kind of rocky so far. I would suggest that anyone considering buying the MIO should first borrow one and test out the exact software – hardware applications you have in mind. I will be glad to answer your questions in person and help anyone interested in testing out the versatility of this device.


ANSWERS: MAMPUZ

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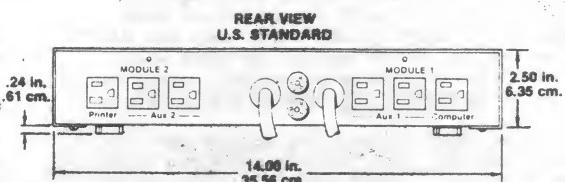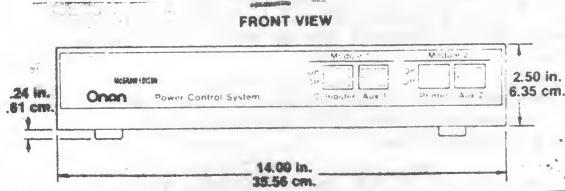
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FUNSTUFF

"MAMPUZ"
by Guy A. Hurt (C.H.A.O.S.)

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hardware... a #2K Pencil (with a good ERASE
HEAD- real WRITE-PROTECTION) plus standard
volitile memory is all you need.

There are no trick clues, and there MAY be more
than one "correct" solution to the puzzle. One
solution will be found elsewhere in this
magazine. Have fun!

(If you have some ideas for quizes, puzzles, or
whatever for "FUNSTUFF", contact your club
editor! We want YOUR material!)

ACROSS CLUES

```
 5. ABNORMAL TERMINATION
 6. GAME
 8. LANGUAGE
10. EQUIPMENT
12. INTERNAL LOCATION
15. ATARI SOUND CHIP
16. INPUT DEVICE
19. NUMBER SYSTEM
20. MEDIA
```

DOWN CLUES

```
 1. ASSEMBLY STATEMENT
 2. LABEL
 3. BASIC COMMAND
 4. BASIC FUNCTION
 7. OUTPUT DEVICE
 9. HARDWARE
11. TABLE
13. SEPARATOR
14. BASIC STATEMENT
17. LOGIC ERRORS
18. SEQUENCED
```
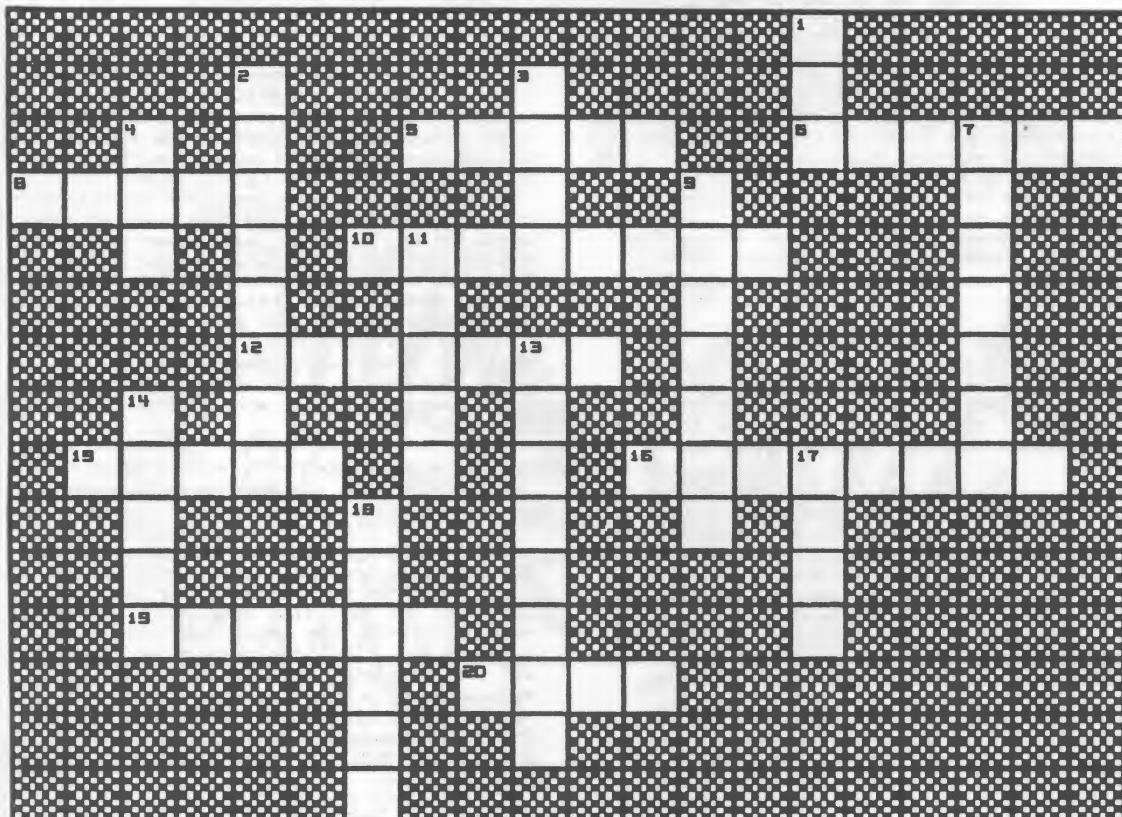
Last Hacks

A FEW MINUTES WITH RANDY MOONEY
by Frank Walters, T.A.C.O. BELL BBS
Excerpted from ZMAGAZINE-ST

Did'ja ever notice---those bulletin boards that go wee-wah.. wee-wah.. wee-wah.. when you connect? That really annoys me. I wish all modems went weeeeeh like mine. Half the time they don't even connect anyway.

Did'ja ever notice---those bulletin boards that don't do anything when you connect? They make you hit RETURN a bunch of times before anything happens. That's a pain in the neck. Nobody answers a telephone that way, they always say "hello?" or something like that. Why don't all bulletin boards say something like "hello" when they connect, and not make you hit a bunch of keys before they say anything? It doesn't seem polite to me.

...Ya know what really bothers me? Did'ja ever see those messages that you try to read and at the end of the message there are about 33 carriage returns and the whole thing scrolls off the screen before you can read it? I think there ought to be some kind of law or something that everybody who writes messages would have to read their own message and if they don't understand it then they would have to delete it.

...Did'ja ever see---those silly twirling cursors on some bulletin boards? Did'ja ever capture for a long time and see how much extra garbage goes into the buffer just from those silly cursors? Even worse, did'ja ever try printing them? Twirling cursors really bug me.

Did'ja ever notice---those cutesy menus that give you no idea what anything is? I mean, why can't all bulletin boards use "G" for Goodbye? I've seen Off, Quit, Land, Terminate, and even Bye. Why does every sysop complain about dropped carrier and then make it so hard to log off? There ought to be a law that certain commands are sacred and can't be touched: Download, Upload, Time, Messages and Goodbye!

Did'ja ever notice---those people who write long messages that are continued on the next message? Did'ja ever notice after reading all those words that you have no idea what they were talking about? I never read any messages that are continued anymore. People who write those messages don't have anything important to say, they just like to see their words on the screen or maybe just like the typing practice.

...Did'ja ever download---a big long file from a long-distance board and the file didn't run? I like to have my friends call the long-distance board and download the long files and then give them to me only if they work. I wish I had more friends. I wish I could be allowed to erase those bad files from the sysop's disk so other people wouldn't have the same problem.

...Doesn't it bother you---that some bulletin boards change the filenames so you don't recognize the download list and you download all the same files as last week but with different names? Maybe the sysop does that 'cause nobody uploads and it makes everybody think he has a lot of different files. I always wondered about that. Maybe somebody uploads them that way so the sysop will think he is getting something new and lets the caller have "blackbeard privileges" or something.

..."Handles" are a pain in the neck. I never could think of a good handle and am embarassed whenever I log-on a new bulletin board and the last question is "What is your REAL NAME?". I never know what to say because I already used my real name. Should I make up a real name different from the one I used at the beginning? One board I logged on asked for my real name first. I thought that would be easy so when it asked for my "Handle" I just answered: NONE. It kept asking: "NONE, what is your command?" Then when I logged off, it said, "Thank you for calling, NONE". I felt real foolish. I don't like bulletin boards that make me feel foolish. I usually don't call back. I never could leave E-mail on those boards because I never could figure out who to send the mail to. Maybe I could find some people more like me by leaving E-mail for "NONE".

...Did'ja ever notice---the sysops that complain the most about callers disconnecting are the ones that have boards that disconnect from YOU? I fill out a long questionaire and then while I am trying to find out where everything is located, I see a message that says "Time expired, disconnecting" and it hangs up. Then the next time I call back I have a nasty note from the sysop that says I let my time run out. That really bugs me. I didn't set the time limit, he did. Why is he mad at me?

That's all the time I have for now. Did'ja ever notice that you never seem to have enough time for/

TIME EXPIRED, DISCONNECTING.

==

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